

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY) is recognized for 20 minutes.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose the Hyde-Lantos-Sweeney amendment, and I find myself in agreement with the Bush administration on this issue. I agree that the United Nations has a poor record in some important areas. All we need to do is look at United Nations behavior in Rwanda and Srebrenica where it aided and abetted in the needless slaughter of 1 million Rwandans and thousands of Bosniacs. Even that, however, is no reason to withhold paying back dues that the United States owes to the United Nations.

How can we expect the United Nations to improve its performance or to respect us if we go back on our word and refuse to pay our bills?

I know that Secretary of State Colin Powell would never agree with going back on our word to the world community, but that is exactly what this amendment will do.

President Bush's spokesperson said yesterday, "While the United States is disappointed with the results of the Human Rights Commission election, the President feels strongly that this issue should not be linked to the payment of our arrears to the U.N. and other international organizations."

However, it is important that while we talk today about human rights around the world and human rights abusers, and even human rights abusers who now sit on the United Nations Human Rights Commission, we must also talk about ourselves.

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We cannot continually stand before the world community with finger pointed outward while never looking inward. And look inward we must. We must look at the way we treat others in our foreign policy, and we must look at the way we treat our own citizens right here in this country.

Christopher Hitchens has written a powerful piece on Henry Kissinger's policies that resulted in deaths all over Asia, in Vietnam, in Indonesia, in East Timor. Hitchens also discusses U.S. policy in Chile. Problems created decades ago that we still suffer the repercussions of today.

I have written tomes myself in disgust at Madeleine Albright's Africa policy, which had the U.S. join hands with hand choppers and rapists of little 12-year-old girls in Sierra Leone, purposely delayed U.S. response in the Rwanda genocide, and then rewarded those at the U.N. and inside our own government who turned a blind eye to what was happening in Africa's Great Lakes region.

Africa is still suffering from what we did not do to help people who wanted

to escape dictatorship and establish democracy and the rule of law. What other suffering will we create or ignore?

But then I cannot talk about the U.S. position on human rights without discussing what is happening right here in America. What about the human rights of America's black men who are dying on the streets? What about the human rights of America's black people?

On the streets of America, I see homelessness and poverty. Here in the Nation's Capital, I see black man after black man after black man sleeping on the streets. They sleep in makeshift cardboard beds, they sleep on sidewalk benches, over heating grates, and under bridges. Black women lie clad in newspapers during the night on the same block as the White House. They are discarded like trash on the streets of America.

On the streets of America, I see racial profiling. The Justice Department admits that blacks are more likely than whites to be pulled over by police, imprisoned, and even put to death. Yet only 2 days ago a Cincinnati grand jury offered the equivalent of a holiday vacation for a white police officer in the fatal shooting of an unarmed black man.

Another black man last week was driving his fiancée's 10- and 8-year-old daughters to school. He was approached by a white policeman, who pulled his gun and shot him in the neck, killing him instantly as the two little girls ran screaming in horror down the street.

The FBI said blacks and whites have about the same rate of drug use, yet while the majority of people arrested for drug abuse are white, the vast majority of those incarcerated are black.

Government studies on health disparities confirm that blacks are less likely to receive surgery, transplants, even prescription drugs, than whites. A black baby boy born in Harlem today has less chance to reach the age of 5 than a baby born in Bangladesh.

I serve in the Congress where the Congressional Black Caucus is shrinking, and yet sections of the Voting Rights Act will soon expire, and, quite frankly, after crippling Supreme Court decisions, there is not much left of affirmative action to mend.

I believe this state of affairs is no accident. We are what we are because it was meant to be.

In the FBI's own words, its counter-intelligence program, then known as COINTELPRO, had as a goal to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit or otherwise neutralize the activities of black organizations and to prevent and, I quote, black "leaders from gaining respectability."

We need only remember that Geronimo Pratt spent 27 years in prison for a crime that he did not commit.

Twenty-six black men were executed in the year 2000. Some of them were probably innocent. And we started this year by executing a mentally retarded black woman.

Now the Bush administration tells us that they are not going to participate in the United Nations Conference on Racism scheduled to take place in the Republic of South Africa in August of this year. I say shame on the Bush Administration for boycotting the United Nations Conference on Racism, and I urge my colleagues to defeat this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I deeply regret that my good friend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and I had to offer this amendment to condition our U.N. arrears payment on the resumption of our membership on the U.N. Human Rights Commission.

I think it is important to analyze what happened at the vote in Geneva carefully. There are three seats reserved for the western nations and there were four candidates. I predict that every single time this should happen in the future, we will be rejected, because we are the most articulate and principled and outspoken proponents of human rights.

Austria does not irritate anybody. The Austrians are getting the votes, but the United States is not getting the votes, because we speak out on human rights violations in Cuba and China and Sudan and Libya and Syria and all over the world. And there are many more human rights violators, Mr. Chairman, than countries that honor human rights.

So in a very fundamental and mechanical sense, the failure of our being on the Human Rights Commission as we speak is the result of the failure of our European friends to act together; and I hope that next year when this similar vote will take place, they will designate only two of their members, so the United States will be the third one and we will be voted again to serve on the Human Rights Commission of which we have been, since its inception, the single most important, most powerful, and most principled member.

It is a separate issue, Mr. Chairman, that 14 members apparently who have given our Department of State written assurances that they will vote for us, taking advantage of the secret ballot, chose not to do so.

Now, the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and I are proposing a reasonable and moderate amendment. Our amendment calls for paying our current tranche which is due, almost \$600 million, without any delay, and to make our last payment, over \$200 million, contingent upon the United States being voted back on to the U.N. Human Rights Commission.

Earlier this morning I had an opportunity to have a lengthy telephone conversation with the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan; and I explained to him the procedure, which he clearly understands. It is our intention to pay every dime